a 16

12 August 1909

Bayreuth,
Sat Thursday.

Beloved,
To my joy I had a letter from
you this morning. I had
made up my mind to some
catastrophe, a suspected mar
Avis letter to Sapen was a
factful way of hinting that
you were in bed with appendicitis,
a nursing sister brought convulsions.
You will be glad to hear that I
decided that if you did, my life
would be worthless. & went on
to enjoy the pictures.
Of course,
We spent a lazy day yesterday,
in doors most of the time, as it

rained, & there was no chance. We
walked amicably & kept ourselves
quite happy. Logan says he is
feeling distinctly better, & he
is even almost sprightly. His
conversation is still odd.
"What did you mean, Virginia, when you
said, about three years ago, that
your view of life was that of a
Hemyfame novel, a mixture of
a Grossmith & Meredith?" I had
to invent a meaning, & she actually
told me that he thought me a very
clever young woman - which is the
highest praise I have ever had from
him.
Olivier's letter was most
irritating. She begins by saying
that she fears she has offended me -
but that I am so much above her &c.
She goes on to make some arid point,
& ends up with what I take to be

pin prick — how she knows me better now
than she did a year ago, & hope I am
not breaking many hearts. Can I
cant think why she wants to keep in
touch with me: her letter is full of
hints, but I shall write — if I write —
like a superb Elephant.
We certainly shant be back by the 28th.
I begin to see what Adrian will have
in Dresden. Have you heard anything
about Hyde Park Gate?
We have got to have tea with
our Cornish & the Mennells & Hagens
this afternoon, between the acts.
They seem to me like pink dusk
Clothes, which has hung out all night
in the rain. Adrian is brotherly to
his new - cuddles them with his paw like a
big dog. Did Sophie discover
what happened to your milk?
I have been writing at Woolmer all
this morning; it keeps my temper very
sweet. We have not quarrelled once,

& I believe We are rather more
friendly than when We started. There is
certainly something very attractive
- not physically - about Saxon.
His purity of mind is such. Also
Adrian is for the most part, not only
clever but even affectionate. For
Gods sake, dont tell him so!
This year has made a great
difference in him - as Aunt Mary might say.

We are now going to
Lohengrin - a very dark opera. a
this is, I repeat, a damnably dull
letter. but the smallest ape brain
always stays after dinner. It is
thought that it is partly a
recollection of struggle for food, when in
a wild state. I should point out
to you, that it is very dangerous to
allow these animals to go long
uncaged for: they are apt to return
to their savage ways. At present
Engaging troop: their fur is in quelled
condition - teeth white, & lips inviting.
I must confess, I never saw a more
They gibber if I only say 'Maria' to them
I wish you would be touched. No one kisses
me here. When do you go to
Poole? Is there a house for me?

VS.

HARRIS 2/16/72

a.17

(16 August 1909)

We go on Saturday to Dresden -
address, C/o. Fraulein Meincke,
Prager Strasse, 38.
Dresden. A.

Bayreuth.

Madam -

Beloved,
no letter today. As it is
better than ever here, I'm
afraid you may be burnt
up. or possibly country
letters take longer to come.
I write in haste - this is no
device, to excuse my dulness -
but I am scrambling through my
article, which has got into a fix, -
the idea at 4 this day
Short. They don't do the
Ring as well as we do it, I
think; our seats are very
near, & the ugly creatures look
still uglier. I can never quite

Got over the florid Teuton
spirit, with its gross symbolism
& its flaxen heroes. Imagine
a heroine in a night gown, with a
pig tail on each shoulder, & watery
eye ogling heaven. Saxon shy
nothing: Adrian prods him for an
specimen — He reclines on his hip
between the acts, & pulls at a weed.
There is a great crowd, & we get
stared at, not for our beauty.
Yesterday, a lean woman with a
face like a ferret bowed to me, &
looked familiar, but I cant think
who she is — a Coltman, or a
Barham Carter, perhaps. The
Meiseybhagens [illegible] us
sometimes, but we dont meet
other wise. Adrian seems quite
indifferent, & so is she, as far
as I can judge. Saxon spent

NYPL

the morning writing a letter; I asked him
who to? — "he said "No one:
It has just occurred to him that he will
send it to Clive. Last night he
burst out into a very quick Shrill
sing song. in German: it meant
Come come come & be killed, Nicholas, my
Goose! He had made it up at
dinner, he told us, which accounted for
his absorption; "Adieu" & talk
to each other. He swears a great deal,
like a boy, & he always says that he
can see nothing funny in it.
These are the humours, sweet honeybee;
Writing seems to me a queer thing.
It does make a difference - I should never
talk to you like this. For one thing,
I don't know what mood you are in.
& then - but the subtleties are infinite.
The truth is, I am always trying to
get behind words; & they flap down
upon me suddenly. When I write to
Ottoline & Lytton, I know all two
centuries, & love them. And then,
you are much simpler than I am. I

thought about that at the opera last night.
How do you manage to see only one
thing at a time? Whatever any of those
reflections that distract me do much
& make people call me bad names.
I suppose you are, as Lytton once said,
the most complete human being you all;
& your simplicity is really that you
take in much more than I do, that
intensity atones. I have been thinking
a great deal about father too, &
discussing him with Adrian. I believe
he was really very modest; he was
certainly not self-conscious in his work,
nor was he an egoist, as I am.
He had very few sympathies though;
& practically no imagination. You might
give your view; this is much at random.
God! how happy to be with you again!
& then these letters will seem absurd.
Do you want me too? It would be
rather nice if I settled in now! I have
got a great many plans in my head.

Yr B.

He apes kiss you.

NYPL

HAMILL 2/16/70

a.18

19 August 1909

Bayreuth.

Thursday.

Beloved,

I suppose you are toiling in God's name in the heat. It is cooler here, though hot enough; & I don't see that I can get any sympathy in that way. A great bag stung me on the second joint of the third finger yesterday: it swelled at once to a big red mound, & as I had been a married woman, with sentimental affection to the wedding ring, a blacksmith might have been needed. As it is, I can still 'etch' (as Sargent says) fairly well & am comparatively calm.

We heard Parsifal yesterday; it was much better done, & I felt within a space 2 stars. I expect it is the most remarkable of the operas; it slides from music to words almost imperceptibly. Heavens. I have been wrestling at the effect all the morning. Without much success. It is very hard to write in one bedroom, without any book to look at, or any especial rabbit path, into the next room. I have balanced my pen on my commode, & made a shaky mark.

Sazen seems rather more shrivelled every day. I believe you weren't fond of him — were trying to hand him on to the great B. (which some interpret Bore). He is a dead weight. Nevertheless, we are all cool & pure.

NYPL

I always have to scribble to you after lunch, before changing for the opera. They make me read the libretto in German, which troubles me a good deal.

Is Sophie as dear as Mirtilla?

Ever I expect she is lazier.

I have had no news of Letters, except yours last night. Aunt Stephen seems to me a good deal rubbed out.

Do you like your portrait of Kate?

Oh my God, I must change now: it is very hot, & a great many fashionable women have arrived, who stare at me between the acts, & as my head was washed yesterday my hair is unusually frizz. I haven't seen one German woman who has a face; they are padding up red dough - & they dress in high art colour, with Egyptological embroideries, rather like old Irish Jewel, in their backs. I am beginning to make winter plans. Shall you be in town ever? I can't imagine why Clive wants to read those letters: perhaps he don't! They are dull, but yrs. affectionately.

I adore you.

a 19

24 August 1909

Dresden,

Tuesday.

Beloved,

There is no letter from you today, & Adrian curses you. However, I gather you are run off your feet; how ghastly to go on, after London, with a week of being nurse! I see no end to your toils. Moreover, you have twice as long as usual. Send us usual. What a word — what a word!

Saxon is hobbily better today; & he has made one or two remarks at meals to Frauleins

Mexika. As they were lamenting
the badness of servants, he said
that the Athenian ladies 2,000
years ago, made the same complaints.
They understood him to say 200,
& old Mexika explained that the
had read the life of Johnson.
Meanwhile, the singer tells us
how she has a Contract for 5
years at the opera she hopes to
be able; but she can't make up
her mind to sign it. The strain
is such that the old mother has
to read with near algia.
Gena heard all her night &
We have the case at least 10 times
wrong & true over. They like best to talk
about food, & really know nothing
about music. Muffins make
them sing Cyrical "with a
whole pat of butter on top, for
breakfast." We went to Salons,

(Strauss, as yu may know) last night.
I was much excited, & believe that it is
a new discovery. He got great emotion
into his music, without any beauty.
Stenbock, Sayen thought we were encroaching
upon Wagner, & we had a long & rather
acid discussion. He has an amazing
knowledge of detail — I cant think why he
doesn't say something more interesting. It
is like reading a dictionary. We went to
the pictures this morning. Sayen &
Colum made straight for the Van Eyck;
Adrian & I did the Italians. It is a
very poor show: there are 4 good
Veroneses, one genuine Titian — but they
have scraped it to the bone — & the
Rafaels. They are smooth works,
beautiful in colour, but insipid.
Sayen discovered a painter called
Van Dreft — who has one picture.
It is very beautiful — Sayen says
"painted with such tenderness".
But we couldn't see the Dutch. This
will have yon.

I got my Holmes article

done in time, & sent it, so I didn't think I need write to Bruce Richmond. A mongrelly bird has performed upon my Shaw hat. Surely here was a profound what that would have ma[illegible], a[illegible] open your women are so little able to cope with such disasters. I have also spilt the ink over my clean shirt - & trying to make a dark with my combs and fell, dragging the sick locks with it. Oh my beloved creature, how little use I am in the world! Selfish, vain, egotistical, incompetent. Will you think out a training to make me less selfish! It is pathetic to see Adrian developing vices as my faults grow. Ste & Sagan discuss how to mend my plaquet hole.

I must start for the Opera.

Yr B.

Write me a nice letter; yr last rather cold.

NYPL

HARRIS 2/16/20

a.20

25 August 1909

Dresden,

Date Wednesday -

Beloved,

I am very glad you are going
earlier to Scotland. Do
you think you could take
me a bedroom + a sitting
room here for a fortnight
from the 16th - & say that
I may want another
bedroom part of the time?
If I had the address I
would write myself.
Adrian had a letter this morning

from his clerk seem to say that he sent him a brief to Fitzroy Square on the 13th. Waller has written to ask why it has not been sent. We have not had anything about it. Did Sophie show it to you, or say she had a letter for Adrian? Probably the brief is not worth forwarding; & the idiotic clerk never have forgotten to say that it was to be sent on. Adrian is rather perturbed, naturally; & Waller with be annoyed. We have telegraphed to the clerk.

NYPL

We went to the pictures again this morning, & discovered several Italians. Van Meer is the man. I mean. There is a Palma Vecchio & 3 Titians

I have been talking to Sargent for 2 hours about art - you would have laughed. Van Eyck is the greatest artist he says. Every stroke is different - such work is it - Italian art sea

Here is Adrian & I must rush. Achar has been closeted for 2 hours with the Swigers, discussing a private legal affair. She almost wept on his shoulder. Her worst day whatever

Yrs B.